ENTERTAINMENT

**Page 3 –** From Screen to Stage: The Lion King 'Roars' back in Detroit


# EL CENTRAL HISPANIC NEWS

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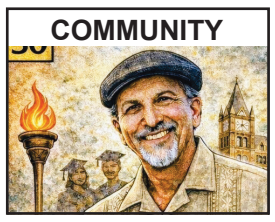
COMMUNITY



**Page 6** - CLLAS to endow a scholarship in the name of Dr. Jorge Chinea

## En Pontiac, voluntarios entregan alimentos para mantener seguras a las familias inmigrantes

Texto y fotos por Erick Diaz Veliz

Los maleteros de los autos están a tope de bolsas y los asientos traseros están igual de llenos. El contenido es variado, pero esencial para todos. Latas de frijoles, bolsas de pan, leche, bolsas de fruta, toallas de papel, papas, frutas y productos importantes de higiene son empacados por Holly Helterhoff, de 55 años, y otros dos voluntarios en dos autos mientras recorren los distritos de Pontiac, donde la población es de mayoría inmigrante y ha sido golpeada por arrestos migratorios. Antes de salir, se abrazan y se desean suerte en el camino.

El objetivo es mantener a los vecinos inmigrantes dentro de sus casas tanto como sea posible para evitar que sean arrestados por agentes de inmigración o, en otros casos, brindar apoyo a familias cuyos proveedores económicos fueron arrestados o deportados,

*Volunteers collect fresh food to deliver to immigrant families.*

**Continúa en la página 4**

## In Pontiac, Volunteers Deliver Groceries to Keep Immigrant Families Safe

Story and photos by Erick Diaz Veliz

The car trunks are overflowing with bags, and the back seats are equally packed. The contents are varied, but essential for everyone. Cans of beans, bags of bread, milk, fruit bags, paper towels, potatoes, fruits, and important hygiene products are packed by Holly Helterhoff, 55, and two other volunteers in two cars on their delivery route through the districts of Pontiac, where the immigrant population is large and has been "hammered" by immigration arrests. Before starting, they hug and wish each other luck on the road.

The goal is to keep immigrant neighbors inside their houses as much as possible to avoid being arrested by immigration agents or, in other cases, to provide support to families whose breadwinners were arrested or deported, leaving them without money

**Continues on page 13**

## Elizabeth Orozco-Vasquez Appointed Director of the Detroit Office of Immigrant Affairs & Economic Inclusion

Mayor Mary Sheffield recently affirmed her strong commitment to Detroit's large immigrant population by naming a highly respected advocate and leader in supporting immigrant needs, Elizabeth Orozco-Vasquez, as the City's new Director of the Office of Immigrant Affairs and Economic Inclusion. Orozco-Vasquez is an accomplished executive with nearly two decades of experience in nonprofit administration, housing stability, and immigrant services.

Most recently, Orozco-Vasquez served as the Chief Executive Officer of Freedom House Detroit, the only agency in the state that provides shelter and wraparound services to refugees, asylum seekers, and others seeking humanitarian protection. As the first Latina to lead the organization in over 20 years, she oversaw a period of unprecedented expansion. Under her leadership, she tripled the agency's operating budget through her work with federal, state, and local governments, foundations, and private funders; launched a multi-million-dollar, phased campus expansion to secure the agency's long-term infrastructure; and, in 2023, increased service capacity by 400%.

*Elizabeth Orozco-Vasquez*

"I am delighted to welcome such a proven and trusted leader as Elizabeth to my Administration," said Mayor Sheffield. "Our residents clearly stated their expectations for this Office and I have heard them loud and clear. Moving forward, the standard for Immigrant Affairs and Economic Inclusion will be to ensure that our practices and policies reflect the needs of our Detroiters that have historically been left out of the City government decision-making processes."

Orozco-Vasquez is an expert at identifying and creating systems to help dismantle barriers for families with significant housing, economic mobility and service access needs. She has worked closely with the City, State and regional stakeholders expand legal access programs, create the second initiative in the state of Michigan to provide mental health services to immigrant survivors of torture, develop employment and housing case management programs, and transform City and State emergency shelter service models.

Among the responsibilities Mayor Sheffield has tasked Orozco-Vasquez with include:

- Leading an Office of Immigrant Affairs and Economic Inclusion Strategic Plan that assesses the needs of traditionally underserved populations and creates metrics toward equitable service delivery
- Ensuring that the voices and needs of Detroit's immigrant communities are represented within the City's internal and external policies and strategies

***"The Mayor tasks Orozco-Vasquez with ensuring that the voices and needs of immigrants and non-English speaking individuals are integrated within City's policies and strategies."***

- Coordinating with the City of Detroit Human Resources Department to ensure that recruitment, training and retention practices result in a workforce that reflects Detroit's diverse demography
- Serving as a subject matter expert and strategy advisor across the Sheffield Administration, focusing on communications, economic development, health and human services and broad service delivery

A Mexican immigrant raised

**Continues on page 3**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# COMIENZA CON FAFSA

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De la oficina del Tesorero del Condado de Wayne,
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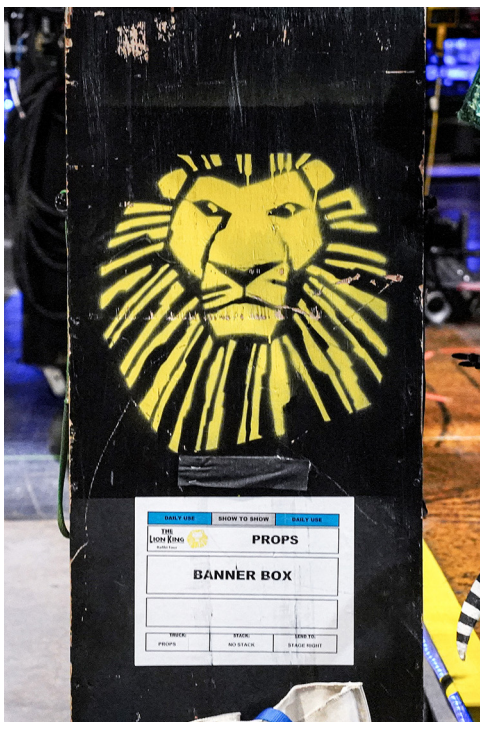
# From Screen to Stage: The Lion King 'Roars' back in Detroit

By Juanita Zuniga | Photos by Luciana Vega

In the darkened Detroit Opera House theater, the audience's anticipation builds in the silence. The room--excited but so quiet you could almost see the smiles and wide eyes from one side of the auditorium to the other.




Then, Rafiki's call echoes from wall to wall; the sun begins to rise, antelopes emerge from the corners and balcony; Giraffes trot across the main stage; and a four person-operated elephant waddles through the audience and makes its way to the stage.

And, for a split second, it looks real.

It's the Circle of Life--literally. Almost every creature in the animal kingdom is represented through life-like puppetry and dance as the audience is treated to this classic performance that appeals to all generations.

The scene ends. The audience, in such awe, claps and cheers in amazement.

The Lion King, which is the longest running show on Broadway after The Phantom of the Opera and Chicago, has made its way to Detroit for its fifth stop this tour. This particular production is so large that it doesn't quite fit every stage; but, luckily for Detroit, it fits like a glove at the Opera House. Arriving on 17 semi-trucks, it has more than earned its reputation as a global phenomenon. From each city, stage, providence, and territory across North America, audiences see the magic The Lion King brings, but there is also a massive operation happening behind the scenes not everyone knows about.

Jose Solivan is the company manager and for the past six years he's been making sure that the Disney magic we know and love in The Lion King comes to life.

"Sometimes The Lion King is the first Broadway show someone has ever seen, and we introduce people to the theater in a really big way", said Solivan. "I always say we spoil audiences, because there's something so immersive, so nostalgic, and so special about this production that you don't always get at this scale"

Solivan is the direct supervisor on the road for about 120 people while also being representative for the producer and the general manager on the road. In his role, he maintains travel, housing, and administrative work. He also works closely with press and marketing, human resources, payroll, and union benefits.

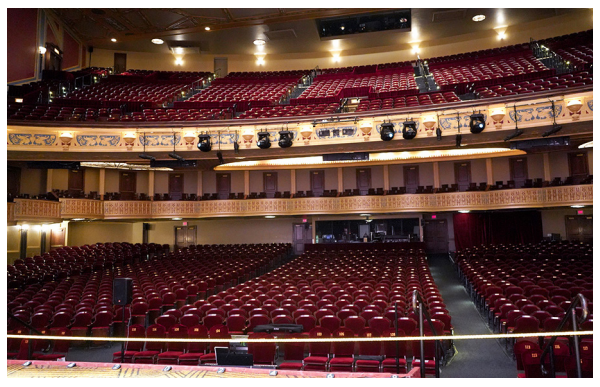
However, Solivan, who is of Puertorican descent, started his career in theater as a performer before becoming the company manager.

"I started as a performer, singing in school and doing theater growing up. I always knew I wanted to be part of this world. Over time, I transitioned into company management after working closely with stage management teams. I've now worked on about 20 Broadway productions, and each experience has shaped how I approach this role."

From Pride Rock to the chariot of gazelle's, each is

'tetrised' (as Solivan says) across the stage and maneuvered in just an eloquent way that beautifies the connection between each actor and puppet, showing a work of art in real time. Throughout the entire showcase, every costume, puppet, and engineered prop becomes more intricate yet astonishing, according to stage manager Michelle Scalpone, "some of the costumes and attachments add about 45 pounds in weight to the dancers"

And for this production rehearsal is 365 days a year, every day and every night for the Lion King. The cast, who play such an important role in how audience members connect themselves to this story also come from an array of backgrounds and parts of the world. Each ensemble casts about 8-12 performers from South Africa to honor and ensure authenticity of culture, language, dance, and singing.

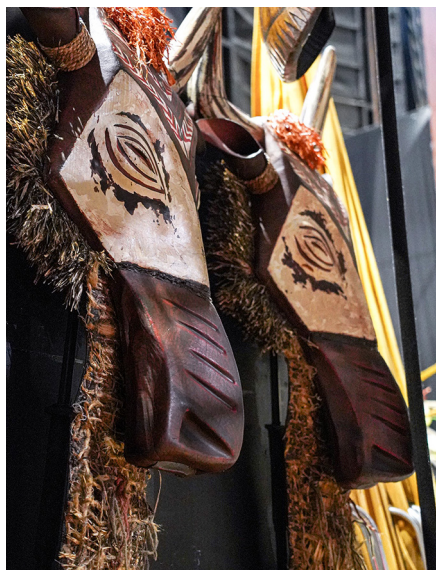


"I want people to see the community and diversity it takes to put on a production like this", said Solivan. "This is one of the most diverse productions that's been touring for over 20 years, and it shows what's possible when people from different backgrounds come together to create something meaningful."

In the two hour and thirty minute musical, The Lion King stretches far beyond the stage and shares a deeper meaning in real life. Through laughs, tears, and the occasional sing-along, it is more than just a show, it's a tradition shared amongst a multitude of people of all ages. This production is the highest grossing musical production for a reason and it does not disappoint.

"This show is one of a kind. I don't know if there will ever be anything quite like it again. That's why it's so important for people to experience it—it's still unlike anything else, even after all these years," said Solivan

The show is currently on the road all over the continental U.S. You can catch the magic of The Lion King until April 5th in Detroit and in Grand Rapids from April 8th-26th, with its last stop being in Greensboro, NC. For tickets or for more information, visit www.us.atgtickets.com/Detroit.



*Juanita Zuniga is a graduate of Kalamazoo College with degrees in Anthropology, Sociology, and English. She was born and raised in SW Detroit and still resides there today. She is passionate about her community and hopes to serve it through writing. In her spare time. Juanita is a Latin history and music enthusiast. She is also a Cancer Sun, Libra Moon, and Cancer Rising.*

*Luciana Vega is a photojournalist with a background in healthcare and a deep love for the culture and community of Southwest Detroit. Passionate about its vibrant music scene, she aims to capture and share the stories of its people through photography.*

*This article and photos were made possible thanks to a generous grant to EL CENTRAL Hispanic News by Press Forward, the national movement to strengthen communities by reinvigorating local news. Learn more at www.pressforward.news.*

# Elizabeth Orozco-Vasquez Appointed Director of the Detroit Office of Immigrant Affairs & Economic Inclusion

**Continued from page 1**

in Detroit, Orozco-Vasquez's professional journey is deeply rooted in her lived experience, which drives her commitment to equity. Now serving as the Director of the Office of Immigrant Affairs and Economic Inclusion, she will leverage her technical and advocacy expertise to ensure Detroit remains a center of safety, equity, and economic opportunity.

"It is a great honor for me to not only work for Mayor Sheffield, the first woman mayor of Detroit, but also to be an advocate for new immigrants and the many generations of immigrants who have long called Detroit home," said Orozco-Vasquez. "I look forward to continuing to help make Detroit a place where each and every one of our residents feels at home and feels welcome in our great city."

"We look forward to ensuring that Elizabeth's deep connections and proven ability to build bridges across communities throughout Detroit result in inclusive partnerships and policies so that our entire city can truly Rise Higher," Mayor Sheffield said.

Orozco-Vasquez's last day at Freedom House will be March 27, which will mark the completion of the construction of a new residential wing - transforming the building, as she put in her farewell message to supporters, "into a blue beacon of safety for those who will continue seeking safety at our doorstep".

She will begin her new position at the City of Detroit on Monday, March 30th. Meanwhile, the Freedom House Board of Directors has appointed Maha Mamo as the Interim CEO to lead Freedom House Detroit through this transition.

# Dolores Huerta's legacy stands on its own

The story of the farmworker movement did not begin with monuments, school names, or holidays. It began in the fields, in the dust, the heat, and the long days of exhausting labor endured by men and women whose work fed this country even as their humanity was too often ignored. It was built by Filipino and Mexican farmworkers in Delano who came together in common cause, by families who sacrificed paychecks and security, by organizers who turned a local strike into a national boycott, and by workers whose courage helped win contracts and lay the foundation for legal protections for collective bargaining and the right to organize. That history was never the achievement of one man alone. It belongs to the thousands of farmworkers, mothers, fathers, elders, and young people who gave their labor, their bodies, and their dignity to a movement for justice.

That is why what has now come to light is so devastating. The conduct that has been described is horrifying, reprehensible, and beyond excuse. There is no moral achievement, no political legacy, and no place in our history grand enough to conceal abuse, coercion, or violence. A movement that asked the nation to confront injustice cannot ask us now to look away from it. If we believe in justice, then we must be willing to tell the truth even when that truth is painful, disillusioning, and deeply unsettling.

And in telling that truth, we must begin where we should always begin: with the victims and survivors. We stand with them completely. We stand with those who have spoken publicly, those who shared their pain privately, and those who may never choose to speak at all. Their suffering is not a footnote to history. Their pain is not secondary to anyone's reputation. Their courage deserves our respect, our compassion, and our unwavering support. They are owed not only belief, but dignity, care, and a community willing to meet this moment with honesty and moral clarity.

We must also say clearly that Dolores Huerta's legacy stands on its own. Dolores Huerta is one of the great civil rights leaders in our nation's history. Her work helped build the farmworker movement, mobilize communities, lead boycotts, expand the cause of labor justice, and advance the rights of women and working families across generations. What she gave to this country cannot and should not be diminished. Her voice, her sacrifice, and her leadership have always mattered, and they matter even more now. In this moment, we should uplift Dolores Huerta not only for what she built, but for the courage and moral seriousness she continues to show.

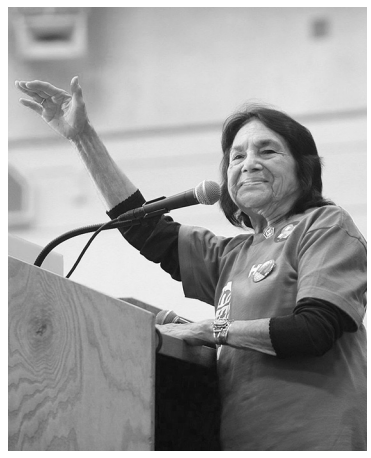
And yes, this moment demands a swift and deserved public reckoning. Murals, schools, streets, scholarships, buildings, and holidays that bear César Chávez's name should be renamed or reassigned. That is not an attempt to erase history. It is a refusal to celebrate harm. History should be taught fully and truthfully, but public honor must be reserved for those whose lives reflect the values we claim to uphold. A community that believes in accountability cannot continue to enshrine a name without confronting what that name now represents.

But even in this reckoning, we must not allow the legacy of one man to overshadow the sacrifice of millions of farmworkers. The people who rise before dawn, who bend their backs in the fields, who endure heat, uncertainty, and hardship to feed our families and millions of Americans every single day, they remain worthy of our deepest respect. Their labor is honorable. Their struggle for dignity is real. Their movement was larger than any one figure, and its meaning cannot be reduced to the failures and betrayals of one person.

The truth is that the histories of longstanding civil rights organizations are often complicated. As leaders in this community, we are always looking toward the future. Even now, we are thinking about LULAC's upcoming centennial and what the next hundred years must look like. But we also know that leadership requires us to carry history honestly, not just its triumphs, but also its failures, its blind spots, and its harms. We do not strengthen our institutions by hiding from hard truths. We strengthen them by confronting them, learning from them, and building something more worthy of the people we serve.

And part of that honesty requires us to look inward as a community. The Latino community is full of resilience, generosity, faith, and pride. But we are not free of flaws. We know that colorism exists in our communities. We know prejudice can take root through class, economic status, skin tone, language, accent, education, and immigration story. And we know that those prejudices can also shape how we relate to other communities of color. These may be minority views, but they are real, and they must be addressed more directly and more courageously now than ever before.

Above all, we stand with our sisters, our mothers, our daughters, and all women in



this moment. We stand with every person who was ever told to stay quiet for the sake of a movement, an institution, a family, or a man's legacy. And to the victims and survivors in this case, we want to say this directly: we see you, we believe you, and you are not alone. Your pain matters more than any symbol, any slogan, or any monument. Your truth matters. Your dignity matters. And as a community, we owe you not silence, not defensiveness, and not delay, but compassion, accountability, and care. May you find strength in being heard, peace in being believed, and comfort in knowing that there are people who will stand beside you now and in the days ahead.

In Community and Solidarity,

LULAC National President and Chairman of the Board

*Editor's Note: Much has been written in the wake of the New York Times revelations chronicling the sexual abuse allegations against United Farmworkers leader Cesar Chavez. The allegations have been corroborated by several witnesses including the esteemed co-founder of the UFW, Dolores Huerta. We have chosen to reprint statements issued by the League of Latin American Citizens (LULAC) to represent the outrage and commitment to move past this human travesty and continue to honor the movement and heroes who bravely fought for the rights of all workers in spite of the abuses they faced from many sides.*

# Voluntarios entregan alimentos para mantener seguras a las familias inmigrantes

**Continuado de la página 1**

dejándolos sin dinero para sobrevivir.

"Muchas familias están siendo separadas por esta ofensiva migratoria", dice Helterhoff, quien comenzó a entregar alimentos el verano pasado como parte de una red de voluntarios para familias inmigrantes. "La comida se convierte en una forma de ofrecer algo de supervivencia y también consuelo. La comida es importante, pero la seguridad es más importante."

La iniciativa nació a principios del verano pasado, impulsada por Community Aid for Empowerment, un grupo activista con sede en Pontiac que ayuda a familias inmigrantes de forma económica, informativa, migra watch y delivery de abarrotes. Y aunque comenzó con solo un puñado de voluntarios y hasta cinco familias por semana, Helterhoff afirma que desde octubre del año pasado el volumen ha aumentado a 30 familias por semana que reciben ayuda una vez por semana. Afortunadamente, la red también ha crecido hasta incluir a unos 20 voluntarios.

Las rutas ya son familiares para la mayoría de los voluntarios; abarcan casas, apartamentos y casas móviles en barrios latinos donde ICE ha estado muy activo. Personas arrestadas de camino al supermercado o de regreso; mientras retiraban dinero en el cajero automático de Chase en Baldwin Ave; o al salir temprano al trabajo—en esos dos minutos entre la puerta de su casa y el transporte—cuando los agentes de inmigración aparecen de repente.

"A veces recibimos llamadas de emergencia, especialmente si alguien acaba de ser detenido y parte de su familia queda atrás con niños y demás", dice Helterhoff. "Y puedo usar alimentos adicionales a los que tengo acceso gracias a donaciones o voy al supermercado para comprar lo básico."

Las familias llegan a esta red de voluntarios a través de la ayuda mutua en iglesias, recomendación de boca o su línea directa, donde también ofrecen comunicación bilingüe. Los voluntarios eliminan a personas de la lista—cuando deciden autodeportarse o dejar Michigan por cualquier motivo—mientras que nuevas familias se añaden, explica.

Antes de salir, Helterhoff echa un último vistazo a su garaje—más de la mitad está ocupado por donaciones de alimentos y productos de higiene que puede almacenar. El auto está listo, pero hoy no usa el suyo; es alquilado. "Para despistar un poco a ICE", dice. "Gran parte de esto es para que nadie me esté rastreando. Porque no quiero que ninguno de nosotros guíe accidentalmente a ICE hasta la casa de alguien." Su primera parada será una despensa de alimentos local para completar la lista de necesidades con productos frescos como verduras, frutas y pan.

"La mayoría de las familias no son elegibles para cupones de alimentos, ya sea por su estatus migratorio o porque han decidido no estar en esas listas por seguridad. Lo que las pone en mayor riesgo", añade.

Los voluntarios no solo aprenden las rutas hacia las casas que deben visitar, sino que también pasan días de capacitación para reconocer vehículos de ICE y evitar confrontaciones o ser seguidos. Esta medida se implementó tras la muerte de dos observadores de ICE, Renne Good y Alex Pretty, a manos de agentes federales en Minneapolis a principios de este año.

"He visto actividad de ICE y he cancelado la entrega de alimentos. Y el destinatario siempre lo entiende. Dicen: 'Ten cuidado, nos vemos mañana, no pasa nada'", comenta Helterhoff.

Llevar a ICE hasta estas familias porque los agentes estén siguiendo a los voluntarios es una de las principales preocupaciones, afirma. "Estamos trabajando con una población vulnerable y no quiero enviar voluntarios a un área donde la gente llama a la línea directa preocupada por la actividad de ICE. Esa es siempre nuestra preocupación como grupo."

Afuera de la despensa de alimentos, se reúne con otros dos voluntarios que han llegado en auto. Comienzan a dividir los suministros que Helterhoff trajo en su vehículo. Después de traer una alacena rodante llena de productos del centro de recursos, empiezan a seleccionarlos y empacarlos en sus autos. Hoy hay bastante comida y será entregada a ocho familias.

"Hemos tenido momentos en los que los suministros bajaron un poco, así que tratamos de ser cuidadosos con lo que tenemos y de contar con múltiples fuentes", explica Helterhoff. "También avisamos a grupos comunitarios que a veces nos traen comida y nos ayudan."

Mientras conduce, señala los lugares donde los arrestos de ICE se han visto con más frecuencia—y donde los agentes suelen patrullar más. Son barrios de clase trabajadora que, durante el auge automotriz, albergaban a trabajadores de fábricas—y que ahora albergan a familias inmigrantes; complejos de apartamentos donde viven grupos de inmigrantes—familias, amigos y compañeros de vivienda—y parques de casas móviles donde las calles y las viviendas pequeñas están muy cerca unas de otras.

Helterhoff conoce bien estos lugares. Aunque se mudó desde el norte de Virginia cuando era adolescente, ha vivido en la zona durante unos 30 años. "Ahora la gente simplemente no sale", dice. "Y, bueno, ya termina el invierno, pero no ves niños caminando. Los apartamentos ahora están como al 50% de ocupación. Antes estaban llenos."

Las entregas en estas áreas específicas son sin contacto. Se cuenta el número de bolsas por familia, ya que algunos hogares albergan a más de un grupo. Las bolsas y cajas se dejan en las puertas, escaleras o porches—según corresponda—y se deja un mensaje para la familia indicando que los alimentos han sido entregados y que el área está despejada. Luego el auto arranca y se repite.

"Esto se ha apoderado de mi vida, pero de una manera que también me ha devuelto mucho", dice Helterhoff. "Porque siempre parece mejor actuar que preocuparse. Esta es una conexión inmediata con mi comunidad."

# Latinos in Tech Show Up in Detroit for Startups, Storytelling, and Success

*By Juan Ochoa*

There is a growing push among Latino tech leaders in Detroit to challenge the community to view the city's growing startup scene not just as a place to launch businesses, but as a training ground to sharpen the skills necessary for success—whether that means climbing the corporate ladder or building something new from the ground up.

At the recent Latino Voices in Tech event, held at the Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation (DHDC), founders and executives gathered to discuss the intentional mindset required to navigate the tech industry. The series is an initiative of CreateValue in partnership with the Minority Education Freedom Foundation.

Andrés Ospina, the founder of CreateValue and the event's master of ceremonies, opened the session by explaining that the series focuses on the "voices" of community leaders to foster inspiration through storytelling.

"I want to emphasize the 'voices' because the storytelling part is about telling that story," Andres Ospina said. "So you can inspire people and say, 'Hey, I want to do that.'"

Liliana Ospina Herbstreith, the foundation's CEO, president and co-founder, added that the partnership is rooted in a long-term commitment to visibility.

"My main goal has been to give representation and to amplify the voices of Latinos," Ospina Herbstreith said.

Founders and executives shared stories of resilience and the unique challenges of representation in the industry.

Facilitator Laura Chávez, who works in IT certification workforce development, noted that while pathways to technology for Latinos are not always clear, the talent is already present in Detroit. "We have to open the doors," Chávez said. "And once we are in the work, we have to bring someone along with us."

Ezequiel Darre, one of the speakers and the financial director of Motmot, explained that the path to success in Detroit may lay in the startup world. Darre, who moved from Argentina to Michigan to pursue his MBA, argued that the speed of learning at a startup far outpaces the experience found in large corporations.

"One day in a startup could be like a complete month in the corporate world," Darre said, explaining that startups offer a level of ownership and proximity to leadership that is rare in larger firms. He urged the younger generation to look beyond big tech names and seek out startups to do some "real world stuff," which he argued could lead to a more proactive and secure professional foundation long term.

The psychological weight of leadership was the theme for Danette Duron-Willner, founder and CEO of Clearheaded LLC. A labor and employment attorney with 25 years of experience, Duron-Willner addressed the audience by asking how many had experienced being the only one in a room representing their perspective, gender, race, age, or ability.

She used this shared experience of professional isolation to challenge those already in leadership positions to recognize their obligation to serve as ethical and trustworthy examples for the community.

Duron-Willner argued that leadership is a daily practice of discipline rather than a title to be granted. "We have to keep on helping each other in representing ourselves and our best light as leaders."

The spirit of grit and determination was personified by David Medina, founder and CEO of LIVAQ, a Detroit-based startup developing high-performance electric all-terrain vehicles. As explained by Medina, the name LIVAQ is a Quechua word representing the explosion of energy that occurs when lightning strikes the earth.

Medina, a Monterrey, Mexico native, detailed a nonlinear path that included working as a construction worker for five months to save just over $21,000 for his prototype. Despite setbacks—including a product development issue and later an eviction—Medina remained resilient.

"We definitely had some hiccups, but that is part of the path that is not linear," Medina said. "In those downs is when we learn what needs to change, what needs to be cleared out, and what needs to be upgraded or evolved."

*Panelists, from left to right. Ezequiel Darre and Danette Duron-Wilner listen to David Medina talk about his entrepreneural journey*

His team successfully developed the Equad, boasting up to a 170-mile range and reaching speeds of up to 75 mph, all in just three years. Medina noted that the project was completed using roughly $1 million in funding, which he described as an exceptionally small amount for the automotive industry.

Organizers plan to establish quarterly events, creating a recurring platform for professional visibility and networking. Chávez emphasized that while the focus is on Latino excellence, the lessons are universal. "You don't have to be a Latino to listen to Latino Voices in Tech," Chávez said.

Andrés Ospina closed the event by encouraging attendees to continue collaborating, stressing that building a robust local tech ecosystem requires consistent support and engagement within the community. "This is just the beginning," Ospina said.

******

***Juan Ochoa is a freelance writer based in Detroit. He has experience with WXYZ-TV, UNESCO, World Radio Paris, and the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers. In his free time, he enjoys traveling, exploring nature, and spending time with family and friends.***

***This article and photos were made possible thanks to a generous grant to EL CENTRAL Hispanic News by Press Forward, the national movement to strengthen communities by reinvigorating local news. Learn more at www.pressforward.news.***

# No Kings Rallies, this Saturday, March 28th

No Kings Detroit is a coalition-led mobilization bringing together grassroots organizations, community leaders and residents from across Southeast Michigan to defend democratic institutions, protect civil liberties and oppose authoritarianism. The March 28 demonstration will begin with a rally at Grand Circus Park in downtown Detroit before marching down Woodward Avenue. More information, event updates, and coalition partners can be found at nokingsdetroit.org.

No Kings Rallies in the Detroit Metro Area: All events are scheduled to take place on Saturday, March 28.

**No Kings Detroit: Grand Circus Park, 3-5pm.**

**No Kings Detroit: Clark Park, 12noon to 3:30pm**

**No Kings Romulus – Coalition to Shut the Camps: 3pm**

**No Kings Grosse Pointe & Eastside Detroit: 11am to 1pm,**

**No Kings Dearborn: 1-3pm**

**No Kings Ferndale: 9 Mile Rd. and Woodward Corner, 12noon to 2pm**

**No Kings Wyandotte: Wyandotte City Hall, 12noon to 2pm**

**No Kings Oak Park: W 10 Mile Rd. and Coolidge Hwy, SE Corner, 10:30am to 12:30pm**

**No Kings Taylor: 12noon**

**No Kings Lathrup Village: 1pm**

**No Kings Troy: 12noon**

**No Kings Livonia: 1pm**

**No Kings Wayne: 1pm**

**No Kings Farmington Hills: 1pm**

**No Kings Northville, Livonia: 11am**

**No Kings Macomb, Sterling Heights: 11am**

**No Kings Pontiac: 2pm**

Other rallies are planned in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, Lansing, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids, Muskegon, Bay City, Saginaw, Flint and in 100 locations across the state of Michigan. Nationwide, more than 3,000 sites have registered and more than 7 million protesters are expected to participate in what could be the largest single-day protest in American history.

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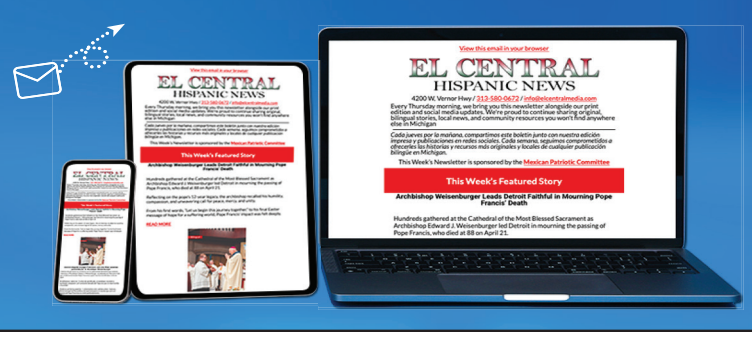


SPECIAL ISSUE | CAREER PATHWAYS

# WSU CLLAS Alumni Raise Money to Honor Professor Chinea Through Lotería

By Melissa Miranda-Morse

Alumni and friends of the Wayne State University Center for Latino/a and Latin American Studies (CLLAS) are fundraising to endow a scholarship in the name of long-time director and professor Dr. Jorge L. Chinea, who will step down as the head of the unit in August 2026.

*Alumni and supporters of CLLAS at the Dr. Chinea Loteria Fundraiser.*

## About Dr. Chinea

Dr. Chinea was born in Puerto Rico and moved to New York City at the age of 13. After earning a GED diploma, he went on to attend college in upstate New York, ultimately receiving a Ph.D. degree in history from the University of Minnesota. He joined Wayne State in 1996 as an assistant professor of history and was appointed director of CLLAS in 2003.

In his three decades at Wayne State, Dr. Chinea has taught, mentored, and advised more than a thousand students. He is also a respected and accomplished scholar of Caribbean history. In 2023, he earned the rank of Distinguished Service Professor at the university, which recognized "unusual service outside of the University [that has] brought great honor and recognition to this institution."

Supporters of CLLAS began donating toward the Dr. Jorge L. Chinea Scholarship Fund in fall 2020 and have since been aiming to reach the full endowment goal of $25,000. An endowment ensures that funds are set aside permanently with interest generated going to a specific purpose. According to the scholarship's memorandum of agreement, future scholarships will be awarded to students at Wayne State who are enrolled in the Latino/a and Latin American Studies academic minor, maintain at least a 2.5 GPA and demonstrate a commitment to community service.

## Latest fundraising efforts

As of February 2026, approximately $17,000 had been raised toward the goal. Reaching the goal prior to August is a top priority for the newly established CLLAS alumni organization, which launched in January and recently incorporated as El Colectivo. The association is comprised of former students of CLLAS (also known as Latino en Marcha and Chicano-Boricua Studies), many of whom took Dr. Chinea's classes or interacted with him in the program.

One such former student is El Colectivo's founding president, Laura L. Chavez, who often credits CLLAS and Dr. Chinea as major contributors to her earning a college degree. Chavez also serves as founder and president of Southwest Detroit-based nonprofit Raíces Detroit, which recently developed a custom lotería deck honoring the historic neighborhood. Lotería Southwest Detroit Edition features well-known landmarks and other renderings of the beloved community. When El Colectivo began brainstorming ways of raising money, Chavez had a great idea.

## Lotería Southwest Detroit benefits the scholarship

On March 11th, El Colectivo and Raíces Detroit teamed up at Mexicantown Community Development Corporation's Plaza del Norte to host the first of two Lotería Southwest Detroit Edition fundraisers benefiting the Dr. Jorge L. Chinea Scholarship. The event featured prizes and support from local businesses, including Donut Villa, E&L Supermercado, and Tamalería Nuevo Leon, all of whom are featured in the lotería deck. Chavez also unveiled a special surprise at the event—a few custom cards and merchandise honoring parts of the CLLAS legacy, including Dr. Chinea and Latino en Marcha.

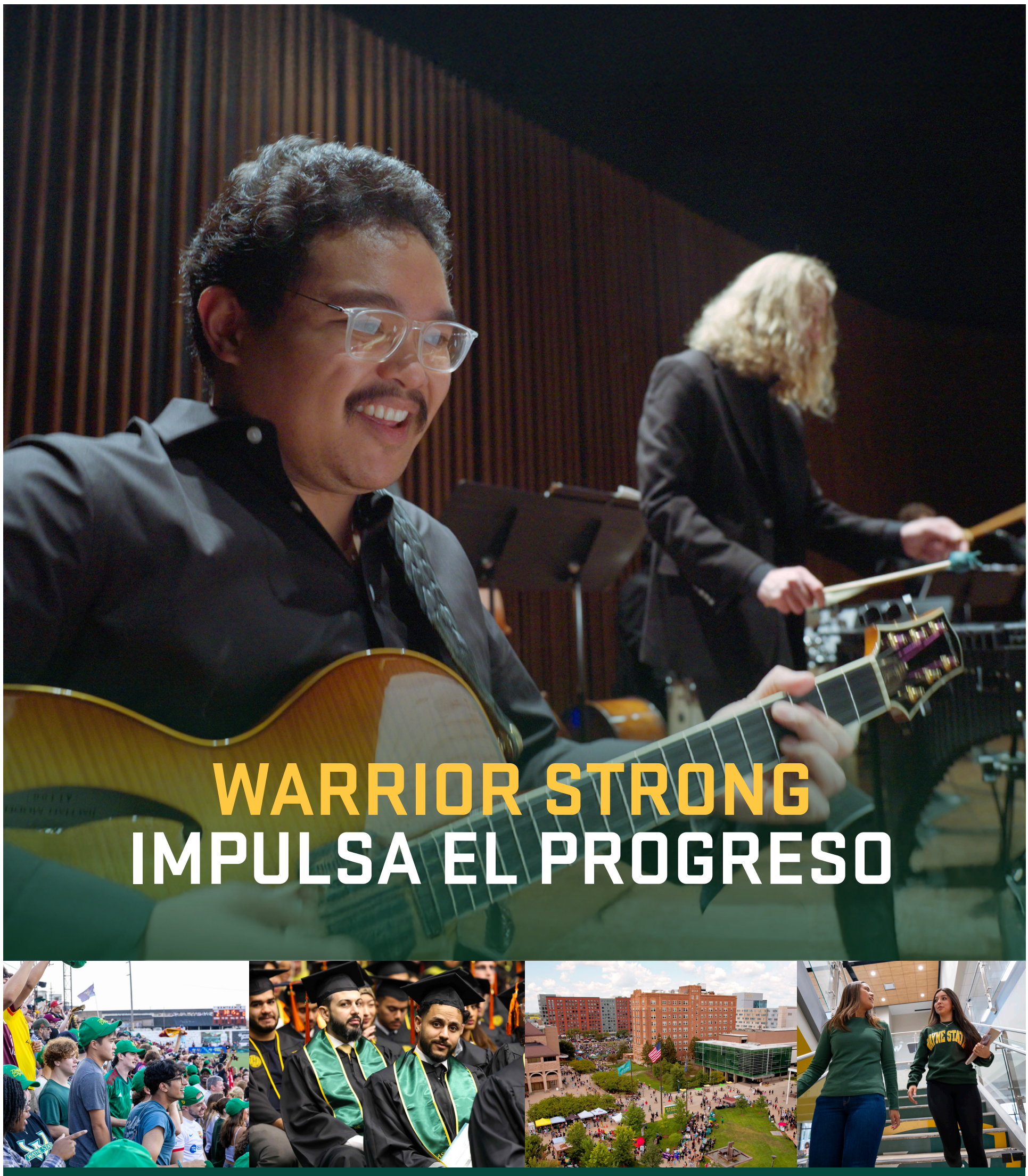
More than $2,000 was raised at the March 11th event, and combined with other alumni efforts, the scholarship fund now stands at more than $21,000. When asked about the success of the evening, Laura Chavez stated, "This wasn't just a fundraiser—it was a reflection of who we are. It took nonprofits, community ambassadors, small businesses, and alumni all coming together to make this possible. Every card, every story represents the people and places that raised us and through Raíces Detroit we're honoring that legacy while creating real opportunities for the next generation." The next Lotería Southwest Detroit Edition fundraiser benefiting the Dr. Jorge L. Chinea Scholarship is scheduled for Saturday, April 11th at 6 p.m. at Mexicantown Community Development Corporation's Plaza del Norte and Chavez welcomes community members to join in the fun and support the cause. See details below.

## About CLLAS

Established in 1971 as the Latino en Marcha Leadership Training Program and formally incorporated into Wayne State University as Chicano-Boricua Studies shortly thereafter, CLLAS was born from the activism of the Detroit Latino/a community. It is one of the oldest scholarly units in the U.S. dedicated to the study of the Latino/a experience and has played an important role in the education and development of leaders in Detroit, the Midwest, and beyond, over its 55-year history. More than 2,500 students have participated in CLLAS student programs, with a multi-generational coalition of alumni working through El Colectivo to ensure it continues to positively impact students for years to come.

Supporters can contribute to the scholarship directly and help reach the goal by visiting: giving.wayne.edu/donate/chinea

***Melissa Miranda-Morse is the Associate Director at the Wayne State University Center for Latino/a and Latin American Studies (CLLAS)***




Wayne State University está comprometida a brindar una educación accesible y asequible a todos los Warriors. Programas como el Heart of Detroit Tuition Pledge y el Wayne State Guarantee que eliminan las barreras financieras que con demasiada frecuencia impiden que las personas cursen una carrera universitaria. Desde la orientación hasta la graduación, ofrecemos apoyo personalizado que ayuda a los estudiantes a tener éxito en sus estudios y prosperar en sus carreras profesionales. Eso es ser Warrior Strong: un respaldo que se adapta a las necesidades de cada estudiante y convierte el potencial en progreso.

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WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
WARRIOR STRONG

SPECIAL ISSUE | CAREER

*Within Your Reach:*

# A Strong Future and Promising Career by Leveraging Time: Time is Golden

By Dr. Aura J. Cazares

In this edition of Within OUR Grasp, I am partnering with Southwest Detroit's Trailblazer and Michigan Hispanic Collaborative's (MiHC) Founder and CEO, JoAnn Chavez to highlight how MiHC expanded their services and is leveraging the importance of time in a moment when Michigan's future workforce is at stake. By helping "OUR" students make informed decisions—and follow through—MiHC is creating opportunity for individuals, families, and our communities.

We often hear the saying "El tiempo es oro." Time is golden. It's something many of us grew up with, a reminder from our parents and families to stay focused, work hard, and make the most of every opportunity. It reflects a shared belief in our community: that education, discipline, and perseverance can open doors to a better future.

And yet, we also know the reality is more complex.

In SW Detroit and across Michigan, most families believe in the value of education and the promise it holds. But too many students are asked to make life-changing decisions without the guidance, information, or support to do so with confidence. The result is not a lack of ambition, but a loss of time—time spent navigating uncertainty instead of moving forward with purpose.

At the same time, our state is at a critical moment. Michigan's future depends on all of "OUR" students being a prepared and skilled workforce, yet too many talented young people are not reaching their full potential. This is not just an individual challenge—it is a shared one, and it calls for a shared response.

That is where our opportunity lies.

When we invest in helping students make informed decisions and give them the competencies and support to follow through, we do more than improve outcomes for individual students. We strengthen families, uplift communities, and build the future workforce our state depends on.

**How does MiHC help students make the best of their limited time?**

At MiHC, we believe time only becomes valuable when it is used with clarity and intention.

Too many students lose time navigating college and career pathways through trial and error, making decisions without the information or support they need. That's where we step in.

Through our Everything to Win (ETW) model, we help students make informed decisions early and then support them to follow through. Students have a clear plan, consistent coaching, and a team behind them, so their time is focused on the actions that truly move them forward.

Equally important, we build the skills that make time productive: critical thinking, communication, and accountability. Students are not just busy—they are intentional.

Throughout my career, whether in corporate leadership or now leading MiHC, I've seen that success is rarely about working harder; it's

about making better decisions sooner. That's the mindset we are instilling in our students.

**How does MiHC help students understand that career exploration starts early?**

We treat career exploration as a process, not a moment.

Too often, students are asked to make career decisions at the end of high school without ever having had meaningful exposure to what different careers actually look like. We change that by starting early and making exploration continuous.

Students engage with professionals, learn about different industries, and begin connecting their interests and strengths to real pathways. They don't just hear about options; they learn how to research and evaluate them.

That distinction matters. Career exploration is not just about exposure–it's about informed decision-making.

When students start early, they make stronger academic, financial, and career choices. They choose pathways that align with their goals, and they stay on track because they understand why their decisions matter.

This is also where partnerships with employers, schools, and community become critical. When students can see and experience what's possible, their decisions become more informed and more ambitious.

**How does MiHC reinforce that being first-generation is a superpower?**

We help students see themselves differently and more accurately.

First-generation students are often navigating systems that were not designed with them in mind. But in doing so, they develop resilience, adaptability, and determination. These traits are critical for success in any environment.

At MiHC, we don't ask students to overcome their background. We help them recognize it as a source of strength and celebrate it.

Through our team-based model and 12-year model, students are surrounded by people who see their potential, hold high expectations, and support them as they grow. They build confidence through encouragement and action—making decisions, solving problems, and achieving milestones.

I've spent much of my career being the only one in the room. What I've learned is that perspective is not a disadvantage—it's a differentiator and a winner.

We want our students to understand that they are bringing something powerful with them. And when paired with the right support and opportunities, that becomes a true competitive advantage—not just for them, but for the organizations and communities they will lead in the future.

Time is golden, but only when it's used with purpose. At MiHC, we ensure "OUR" students don't just spend time navigating systems. They invest it in building a future—for themselves, their families, and the state of Michigan.

***Dr. Aura J. Cazares (she/her/hers) is a firstgeneration immigrant and college graduate whose higher education expertise centers on expanding educational and professional access through cultural humility, campus wellness, and sustainable leadership. Her collaborative approach has strengthened student recruitment and retention across a wide range of institutions, and she has been recognized for advancing campus cultures of belonging. She has served on numerous boards and task forces—including two gubernatorial appointments to Michigan's Sexual Assault Prevention Task Force and multiple county-level violence prevention and response groups. Recently, she has been appointed to serve as Eastern Michigan University's Dean of Students where she leads with courage, integrity, and empathy to broaden educational and career opportunities for the communities she serves.***

# Career and Technical Education

Across Michigan, families are thinking about their futures. They're asking: What jobs are available? Will they pay enough to support a family? Can we build a future right here at home? Career and Technical Education (CTE) meets people where they are, offering practical, hands-on learning that leads directly to real, good-paying careers. During Career and Technical Education Month, we're seeing firsthand how these pathways are helping Michiganders turn opportunity into stability.

Together, the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) and the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) recognize how CTE connects students and adult learners to hands-on training aligned with real jobs and real wages. These programs help people gain practical, in-demand skills across fields like advanced manufacturing, health care, information technology, construction and many more skilled trades. The result is a stronger workforce and more families able to build prosperous futures right here in Michigan.

This approach is already making a difference. Nearly 500,000 job openings are projected each year through 2032. During the 2024–25 school year, CTE enrollment hit a high of nearly 115,000 high school students, and more than 55,000 students completed their programs. At the post-secondary level, more than 122,000 students enrolled in CTE programs, earning 15,000+ industry-recognized credentials that employers across Michigan are actively seeking.

These outcomes are possible because of strong partnerships across education and workforce systems. MDE's state-approved CTE programs and Early Middle Colleges give students a head start by allowing them to earn college credit, credentials or even an associate degree while still in high school. LEO complements this work through workforce initiatives like Registered Apprenticeships, ensuring employers can train talent and workers have clear pathways to quality jobs. Tools like MISchool Data (www.mischooldata.org) and Michigan's Pathfinder (www.pathfinder.mitalent.org) make it easier for students, parents and job seekers to explore career options and training opportunities.

For families, this work goes beyond statistics. It means students graduating with skills that lead to steady paychecks, parents seeing their kids stay and succeed in Michigan, and employers filling critical roles that keep local economies moving. When education and workforce partners align around opportunity, communities are stronger and Michigan remains competitive.

MICHIGAN Department of Education

# PATHWAYS

*A tu alcance:*

## Aprovecha el tiempo para construir un futuro prometedor: El tiempo es oro

Por Dra. Aura J. Cazares

Esta edición de A TU Alcance tenemos como coautora a la ejecutiva y pionera en liderazgo, JoAnn Chavez, para informar a nuestra comunidad de los servicios que su fundación sin lugar a lucro Michigan Hispanic Collaborative (MiHC) y destacar cómo MiHC amplió su servicio a nuestras familias ensenando como usar el tiempo a nuestro favor, especialmente ahora que el futuro de la fuerza laboral de Michigan está en juego. Al ayudar a "NUESTROS" estudiantes de a tomar decisiones informadas —y dar seguimiento a lo que se proponen—, MiHC crea oportunidades para estudiantes, familias y nuestra comunidad.

*JoAnn Chavez*

A menudo oímos el dicho "El tiempo es oro" y es no solo un refrán con el que muchos crecimos, sino un consejo de nuestros padres y nuestras familias para mantenernos concentrados en nuestras metas, trabajar duro y aprovechar al máximo cada oportunidad. también refleja la creencia compartida en nuestra comunidad: que la educación, la disciplina y la perseverancia pueden abrir puertas a un futuro prometedor.

En el suroeste de Detroit y en todo Michigan, la mayoría de las familias creen en la promesa de un futuro mejor al obtener una educación universitaria. Lamentablemente demasiados estudiantes confrontan decisiones que cambiaran sus vidas sin orientación, sin obtener los factores indicados, ni el apoyo para hacerlo con certeza. Este proceso no es por falta de ambición o seriedad, sino por que dedican demasiado tiempo navegando sistemas y procesos al alba en lugar de avanzar con una menta segura en mente.

Al mismo tiempo, nuestro estado atraviesa un momento crítico. El futuro de Michigan depende de que todos NUESTROS estudiantes estén preparados y tengan las cualidades necesarias para formar parte de la fuerza laboral.

Desafortunadamente muchos de nuestros jóvenes tienen el talento para afrontar este reto, pero no están alcanzando su potencial máximo. Ayudarlos no es un reto, sino comunitario.

Cuando invertimos en enseñar a los estudiantes como tomar decisiones informadas —y les damos la capacitación y el apoyo para llevarlas a cabo—hacemos más que mejorar el futuro de cada alumno. Fortalecemos a nuestras familias, elevamos comunidades y construimos el tipo de fuerza laboral en la que puede depender nuestro estado.

### ¿Cómo ayuda MiHC a los estudiantes a aprovechar al máximo su tiempo limitado?

En MiHC, creemos que el tiempo incrementa su valor cuando se utiliza con claridad e intención. Demasiados estudiantes pierden tiempo navegando el sistema universitario y elijen su carrera mediante prueba y error sin la información o el apoyo que necesitan cuando toman esas decisiones. Ahí es donde entra el apoyo brindado por MiHC.

A través de nuestro modelo Todo para Ganar (ETW), ayudamos a los estudiantes a tomar decisiones informadas desde el principio y apoyamos para que den seguimiento a sus elecciones. Los estudiantes tienen un plan claro, asesoría constante y un equipo que los respalda, por lo que su tiempo se centra en los pasos que realmente les impulsan hacia al éxito.

Con la misma importancia, los guiamos para que desarrollen habilidades que hacen que el tiempo sea productivo, por ejemplo, como desarrollar el pensamiento crítico, saber comunicarse y responsabilidad. De esta manera los estudiantes no solo están utilizando su tiempo en estar ocupados, si no utilizan su tiempo con intención.

A lo largo de mi carrera—ya sea en liderazgo corporativo o ahora liderando MiHC—he visto que el éxito rara vez consiste en trabajar más duro; se trata de tomar mejores decisiones lo más pronto posible. Esa es la mentalidad que estamos inculcando en nuestros estudiantes.

### ¿Cómo ayuda MiHC a los estudiantes a entender que la exploración profesional comienza temprano?

Tratamos la exploración profesional como un proceso, no como un paso. Demasiadas veces, se les pide a los estudiantes que elijan una profesión al terminar la preparatoria sin tener idea de lo que realmente conlleva una carrera. MiHC ha cambiamos eso al proveer exploración profesional temprano y de una forma continua.

Los estudiantes interactúan con profesionistas de diferentes industrias, aprenden sobre diferentes ramas y comienzan a conectar sus intereses y sus habilidades con caminos que conllevan al éxito. De esta manera, no solo escuchan opciones, aprenden a evaluarlas. Esa distinción importa porque la exploración profesional no solo se basa en exposición, también requiere de saber cómo tomar decisiones.

Cuando los estudiantes comienzan su búsqueda pronto, toman decisiones académicas, financieras y profesionales más sólidas. Eligen caminos que se alinean con sus objetivos y se mantienen en el proceso porque entienden qué sus decisiones importan.

En esta etapa es también donde las colaboraciones—con empleadores, universidades y la comunidad—se vuelven fundamentales. Cuando los estudiantes pueden ver y experimentar lo que es posible, sus decisiones se vuelven más informadas y ambiciosas.

### ¿Cómo refuerza MiHC que ser la primera generación que persigue estas metas es un superpoder?

Ayudamos a los estudiantes a verse a sí mismos de forma diferente—y con mayor precisión. Los estudiantes que son la primera generación suelen navegar sistemas que no fueron diseñados pensando en ellos. Pero al hacerlo, desarrollan resiliencia, adaptabilidad y determinación, rasgos fundamentales para el éxito en cualquier entorno.

En MiHC, no pedimos que "superen" las dificultades que conlleva su origen; les ayudamos a reconocer sus retos como una fuente de fortaleza y a celebrar su espíritu de superación.

A través de nuestro sistema basado en equipos y un modelo de 12 años, los estudiantes están rodeados de personas que ven su potencial, tienen expectativas altas y les apoyan mientras crecen. Con esto se les ayuda a que construyan la confianza en sí mismos, no solo través de darles ánimo, sino también mediante las lecciones de vida que se les provee como: tomar decisiones, resolver problemas y alcanzar sus metas.

He pasado gran parte de mi carrera siendo la única persona con mi experiencia e identidades en muchos espacios y situaciones. Lo que he aprendido es que la perspectiva no es una desventaja: es un diferenciador y lo que hace una ganadora.

Queremos que nuestros estudiantes entiendan que llevan consigo algo poderoso. Y cuando se combina el talento con el apoyo y las oportunidades adecuadas, esto se convierte en una verdadera ventaja competitiva, no solo para ellos, sino para las organizaciones y comunidades que liderarán en el futuro.

El tiempo es oro—y su valor incrementa cuando se usa propósito. El apoyo invaluable que provee MiHC, a "NUESTROS" estudiantes está ligado a que no inviertan tiempo navegando sistemas sin asesoría, sino que utilicen su tiempo construyendo un futuro prometedor, para ellos mismos, sus familias y el estado de Michigan.

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***La Dra. Laura J. Cazares (ella) es una inmigrante y la primera persona en su familia que egresada de la universidad, cuya experiencia en educación superior se centra en ampliar el acceso educativo y profesional a través de su liderazgo basado en la humildad cultural, balanceando el bienestar mental de sus comunidades. Su enfoque colaborativo ha fortalecido el reclutamiento y la retención de estudiantes en una amplia gama de instituciones, y ha sido reconocida por promover culturas universitarias de pertenencia. Ha formado parte de numerosos grupos de trabajo y gabinetes ejecutivos, incluyendo dos nombramientos gubernamentales para el Grupo de Trabajo de Prevención de Agresiones Sexuales de Michigan y múltiples grupos de prevención y respuesta a la violencia a nivel de condado. Recientemente, ha sido nombrada Decana de Estudiantes (Dean of Students) de Eastern Michigan University, donde lidera con valentía, integridad y empatía para ampliar las oportunidades educativas y profesionales de nuestra comunidad.***


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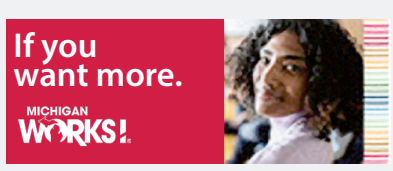


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# DCFC Defeats Louisville Triumph FC 6-5

EL CENTRAL HISPANIC NEWS SPORTS

Sports Editor: Dan Graschuck/ EL CENTRAL

Photos by Adam J. Dewey/ EL CENTRAL PHOTOGRAPHER

Led by Erin Torrence's five goals, Detroit City FC defeats Louisville Triumph FC 6-5 at Keyworth Stadium on March 20, 2026 to advance to the MASL-W semi finals.

Photos below are highlights from Detroit City vs. Louisville Triumph FC

*DCFC goalie Kerstyn Williams (#1) deflects a shot*

*Head coach Dani Evans celebrates DCFC's 6-5 victory over Louisville Triumph FC with the Detroit City FC supporters in attendance*

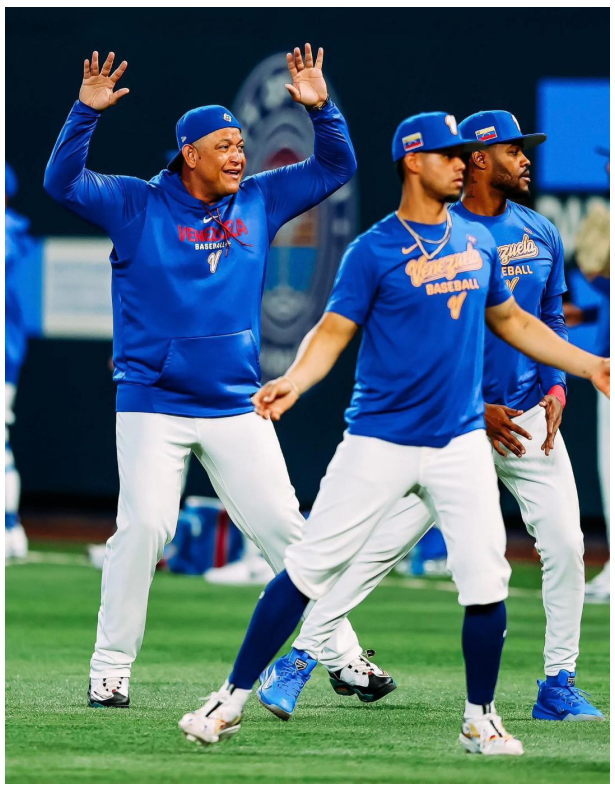
*Erin Torrence (#19) celebrates one of her five goals against Louisville Triumph FC with teammate Ania Dow (#20)*

*DCFC goalie Kerstyn Williams (#1) looks back as a shot on goal narrowly misses, hitting the vertical bar*

# Team Venezuela Wins 2026 World Baseball Classic Crown

Photos provided by Detroit Tigers, article by Dan Graschuck/ EL CENTRAL

Team Venezuela's and some of the Detroit Tiger's front office and coaching staff, Miguel Cabrera (shown below, Special Assistant, Hitting Coach) and Jorge Cordova (Pitching Coordinator, Bullpen Coach) have helped Team Venezuela defeat Team USA in the World Baseball Classic. Cabrera played in five WBC series, as a player, but only won one as the hitting coach, this year. Two former Tigers played big roles in the win, Eugenio Suarez drove in the winning run, in the ninth inning, and Eduardo Rodriguez, pitched 4 1/3 scoreless innings. This is the first WBC crown for Venezuela. The Detroit Tigers open the new season on the road this Thursday, at San Diego. The Tigers home opener is next week, on Friday April 3rd, at Comerica Park.



# Indy XI Brings DCFC Down To Earth

EL CENTRAL HISPANIC NEWS
Pateando la No. 5
SPORTS

David Levine
EL CENTRAL

Detroit City's quick start to 2026 came to an abrupt halt with a 2-1 loss to the team they edged out for the final playoff spot in 2025. Indy XI took advantage of some inattentive defending to gain a measure of revenge for last year's playoff ouster.

After a tight first half during which DCFC had much of the possession without finding a way through a packed defense and the imposing 6'5" frame of goalkeeper Eric Dick, a lapse in concentration allowed Bruno Rondon to get behind the back line. He pulled a cross back from the goal line and Dylan Sing darted in between Devon Amoo-Mensah and Callum Montgomery to nod home the opening near halftime.

In theory, the goal should have galvanized the hosts, but it shocked DCFC into more urgency at the start of the second half. Kobe Hernandez-Foster, Haruki Yamazaki, and Ates Diouf all had shots in a spirited opening to the final forty-five minutes. Eventually, Hernandez-Foster provided the killer pass required to open up Indy's stingy defense. After DCFC won possession in their own half, they comfortably circulated the ball before finding Hernandez-Foster midway between the penalty area and the center circle. Indy had drawn their defenders forward, leaving space in behind for Darren Smith. Hernandez-Foster sent a long ball over the top of the defense. Smith brought it down on his chest and coolly slotted the ball under Dick to level the score.

Sadly, parity didn't last long. Again, it was a lapse of concentration five minutes later. Amoo-Mensah headed a lofted ball down and straight ahead instead of up and away. Indy's Josh O'Brien won the second ball and found Bruno Rondon who fired a half volley into the top corner past Carlos Herrera. From there, DCFC huffed and puffed, but couldn't find a way past Dick in the Indy goal. Last year, Dick ended DCFC's season when he backstopped Pittsburgh to a playoff shutout and penalty kick victory over Le Rouge. He went on to win a playoff title with the Riverhounds. The Carmel, Indiana native returned home this year and will keep Indy XI in a lot of games.

DCFC looked like they were going to get off to another hot start after cruising past Brooklyn 3-0 in the home opener and then using a four-goal second half outburst to advance past the Michigan Rangers in the US Open Cup. Coach Danny Dichio may have to re-think his approach, so that the team can produce more goals. That Cup win has added another Michigan derby to the schedule. After hosting the undefeated Charleston Battery at Keyworth on Saturday after noon, DCFC will take a midweek trip north on I-75 to meet the Flint City Bucks at Don Batchelor Field in Grand Blanc. That game will not be easy. The Bucks have a long track record of beating professional teams, including multiple MLS clubs. They beat USL League One side Forward Madison 2-0 in the first round and will relish a shot at Detroit City next week.

**POCHETTINO GATHERS SQUAD FOR PRESTIGE FRIENDLIES**

The US national team has gathered to start the last camp before Mauricio Pochettino announces the roster Europe's top teams in Belgium and Portugal in the Mercedes-Benz Stadium.

Both Belgium and Portugal will give the US a tough game. Even though the great Cristiano Ronaldo will not be available due to an injury, there will be a massive crowd to see the likes of Bruno Fernandes, Vitinha, Rafael Leao, Joao Felix give Pochettino's team a thorough examination.

First up, though, will be Belgium on Saturday afternoon. This is not so much the Golden Generation of the 2010's. Key players like Kevin DeBruyne and Romelu Lukaku are past 30 and have had injury-ravaged seasons. Star goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois is injured and will not play. There is a chance that Manchester United number one Senne Lammens could start. He has had a quietly solid first season in England. Manchester City's Jeremy Doku will be a threat on the wings. Axel Witsel and Youri Thielemans will bring a veteran presence to midfield.

Pochettino will have to do without Tyler Adams, Haji Wright, Sergino Dest, and Diego Luna who are in various stages of recovery from injuries. However, the team will welcome the return of left back Antonee Robinson from a lengthy international absence. Striker Folarin Balogun comes into camp having scored seven goals in his last seven games for Monaco. Ricardo Pepi will provide some competition for the starting striker spot. Christian Pulisic, Weston McKennie, Tim Weah, and Chris Richards have also been included, emphasizing Pochettino's serious approach to these two games.

Matt Freese of New York City FC has started the last twelve international games in goal. There's no reason to expect a change, because none of the other candidates has done anything to prove they deserve the job. Matt Turner, Chris Brady, and Patrick Schulte have all been called into camp, but none are setting MLS alight with their play. Turner and Schulte find themselves near the bottom of the league for New England and Columbus. Freese has been the best of the lot, but conceded three to Inter Miami last weekend. Brady and the Chicago Fire sit fifth in the Eastern Conference having given up five goals in five games. So, until one of the chasing pack, which includes Roman Celentano of FC Cincinnati who withdrew due to injury, takes a major step forward, it will be Freese in goal.

After Belgium moves on to Chicago to face Mexico, Portugal will arrive from Mexico to face the USA. Given the short turnaround for both teams, expect lineup changes as both Pochettino and Portugal's Roberto Martinez assess the depth of their squads. Ronaldo's absence will give Martinez an opportunity to look at Goncalo Ramos up front. The PSG striker is a more traditional number nine, physical, and adept in the air as well as with his feet. He also has a decision to make in goal where Diogo Costa, Jose Sa, and Rui Silva are battling for the top job. Portugal, with Ronaldo fit in June, will arrive in the US with legitimate hopes of making a deep run in the World Cup. They have more depth on their roster than the majority of teams. This will be a stern test for the Americans and a real measuring stick against one of the favorites.

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# EDITORIAL OPINION

**Guest Opinion:**

## NO KINGS; NO WAR; NO ICE

This past Tuesday, Michigan organizers put elected officials from both parties on notice ahead of the third national No Kings mobilization scheduled for this Saturday. Their demands are clear: defend the Constitution at all costs; protect the Michiganders brutalized by ICE and stop the ongoing escalating war in Iran; and champion fixes to this mess that will build a state where everyone can thrive in the wake of what the Trump administration has destroyed.

Michiganders still don't have answers regarding the death of 56 year old Nenko Gantchev at the GEO group's private detention facility in Baldwin Michigan, and just this weekend the New York Times exposed life-threatening conditions for pregnant women and infants in ICE detention centers. For months, too many Michigan politicians have responded with carefully worded press releases while failing to fully use the authority of their offices to stop these human rights abuses. When democratic institutions, civil rights, and the foundations of the rule of law are under threat, the relative silence from Michigan's elected leaders isn't neutrality—it is complicity.

"Thousands of Michiganders are furious about the proposed ICE detention center in Romulus; we're opposed to the ICE expansion in Southfield and Romulus; and the fact that people are dying in the Midwest's largest detention center in Baldwin, Michigan while deaths go uninvestigated, is unconscionable and unacceptable," said Sherri Masson, one of Michigan's Indivisible leaders. "Public officials are not elected to comment on crises—they are elected to confront them."

Well, this is a crisis. We're funding and allowing 21st century concentration camps in Michigan, and we need every single politician to join us in shutting them down. Furthermore, we demand criminal charges and prosecutions for every federal agent violating our civil rights. Now. No Kings. No War. No ICE."

"The cost of living is going through the roof, but instead of using our tax dollars to repair our own crumbling infrastructure, Michigan residents are being forced to subsidize AI data centers that communities are actively working to keep out. These facilities are not simply energy consumers. They represent serious surveillance infrastructure carrying national security risks that Washington D.C. is ignoring while everyday families foot the bill," said Sean Webber with the Public Research Initiative.

"When tech billionaires and utility companies can drown out Michigan voters, our democratic process is in serious trouble. This administration will not step in to protect working families, which means it falls on our state legislature to act. Michigan State legislators have both the authority and the responsibility to introduce meaningful protections for ratepayers and communities," Webber said.

We need to get utility money out of our elections so that voters, not donors, shape the future of this state. I encourage every concerned resident to join the thousands of volunteers collecting signatures to take back Lansing, so it's our communities that are served by legislators–not AI tech companies and utilities."

Indivisible leaders have also been working with voting rights advocates across Michigan since 2025. That's because tyrants use every tool at their disposal to avoid the public accountability of free and fair elections, and the Trump administration is chock-full of election conspiracy theorists committed to repeating lies about the 2020 election outcome.

"When corrupt tyrants can't win elections because they're doing unpopular things, like starting a war with Iran, they resort to trying to stop people from voting. That's what is happening right now. Trump thinks that he can keep hundreds of thousands of Michiganders from voting this November by lying about what the SAVE act really does, and teaming up with the completely discredited billionaire backing the "documentary proof of citizenship" ballot drive that recently turned in signatures here in Michigan.

Well, we have news for him," said Angela Davenport, the Executive Director of the Voting Access for All Coalition. Angela continued, "We will defeat every single attempt to deny Michiganders their right to vote. This will backfire on them. We will fight them in court. We will fight them at the board of state canvassers. And we will fight them at the ballot box by ensuring that every single Michigander that is eligible to vote can do so without fear, and without interference this November."

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- Statement from the coalition of organizers of No Kings-Detroit.

**Opinions in this column are not necessarily those of the Publisher or Editor**

**Do you have a contrary opinion? Write us at info@elcentralmedia.com**

## Volunteers Deliver Groceries to Keep Immigrant Families Safe

**Continued from page 1**

to survive.

"Many families are broken up during this immigration crackdown," says Helterhoff, who started delivering food last summer, as part of a volunteer network for immigrant families. "Food becomes a way to provide some survival and some comfort. Food is important, but safety is more important."

The initiative was born early last summer, spearheaded by Community Aid for Empowerment — a Pontiac-based activist group that assists immigrant families. And although it began with just a handful of volunteers and up to five families per week, Helterhoff states that since October of last year, the volume has surged to 30 families per week that are helped once per week. Happily, the network has also grown to include as many as 20 volunteers.

*Holly Helterhoff stores groceries in her garage to deliver to immigrant families.*

The routes are already familiar to most of the volunteers; they cover houses, apartments, and mobile homes in Latino neighborhoods where ICE has been highly active. Arrested on the way to or from the supermarket; while withdrawing cash from the Chase ATM on Baldwin Ave; or while leaving early for work—during those two minutes between the front door and public transit—where immigration agents suddenly appear.

"Sometimes we get emergency calls, particularly if someone has just been detained and part of their family is left behind with kids and stuff," Helterhoff said. "And I might use the side food I have access to through donations, and also need to run to the grocery store to get some basics."

Families reach this volunteer network through church mutual aid, word of mouth, recommendations, or their hotline, where they also provide bilingual communication. Volunteers remove people from the list—as they decide to self-deport or leave Michigan for any reason—while new ones are added, she says.

Before leaving, Helterhoff takes one last look at her garage—more than half of which is occupied by donations of food and hygiene products that she can store. The car is ready, but today, she isn't using hers; it's rented. "To throw off the ICE a little," she says. "A lot of it is so no one is keeping track of me. Because I don't want any of us to guide ICE to someone's home accidentally." Her first stop will be a local food pantry to round out the list of necessities with fresh items such as vegetables, fruits, and bread.

"Most of the families aren't eligible for food stamps either because of their immigration status, or they have chosen not to be on those lists for safety. Which puts them at more risk," She adds.

Volunteers not only learn the routes to the homes they must visit, but also undergo days of training to recognize ICE vehicles and avoid confrontations or being followed. This measure was implemented following the deaths of two ICE watchers, Renne Good and Alex Pretty, at the hands of federal agents in Minneapolis earlier this year.

"I've seen ICE activity, and I've canceled the food delivery. And the recipient always understands. They're like, 'Be careful, we'll see you tomorrow, it's fine," Helterhoff says.

Bringing ICE to these families because they were following the volunteers is one of the main worries, she says. "We are dealing with a sensible population, and I don't want to send volunteers to an area where people call the hotline concerned about ICE activity. That's always our concern as a group."

Outside the food pantry, she meets up with two other volunteers who have arrived by car. They begin dividing up the supplies Helterhoff brought in her vehicle. After they bring a rack full of products from the resource center, they start selecting and packing them in their cars. Today, there is plenty of food, and it will be delivered to eight families.

"We had times where the supplies got a little low, so we just try to be careful with what we have and to have multiple streams," explains Helterhoff. "We also put the word out to community groups that sometimes bring us food and help us out."

As she drives, she points out the spots where ICE arrests have been spotted most frequently—and where agents tend to patrol most often. These are working-class neighborhoods that, during the automotive boom, housed factory workers—and now house immigrant families; apartment complexes that house groups of immigrants—families, friends, and roommates alike; and trailer parks where roads and small houses are close to each other.

Helterhoff knows these places well. Although she moved from Northern Virginia as a teenager, she has lived in the area for about 30 years. "Now people just don't go outside," she says. "And, you know, it is winter, but you don't see kids walking around. The apartments are now, like, 50 percent occupied. They used to be full."

Deliveries in these specific areas are contactless. The number of bags per family is tallied, as some households accommodate more than one group. The bags and boxes are left at the doors, on stairs, or on porches—as appropriate—and a message is left for the family indicating that the groceries have been delivered and the area is clear. Then the car starts up, and volunteers repeat the process.

"It's taken over my life, but in a way that has given me back a lot," Helterhoff says. "Because it always seems better to take action than worry about it. This is an immediate connection to my community.

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*Erick Diaz Veliz is a Peruvian reporter based in Lansing, Michigan. He has documents and reports on cultural, social, and political issues in Peru and Michigan as a freelancer. Erick was born in Lima, Peru, and has been living in Lansing since 2018.*

*This article and photos were made possible thanks to a generous grant to EL CENTRAL Hispanic News by Press Forward, the national movement to strengthen communities by reinvigorating*

# SPECIAL WORLD'S CULTURES

## Palm Sunday

## Palm Sunday

In the Catholic Church's celebrations, Lent is the most important, as it represents Jesus' preparation for the greatest miracle: the resurrection. Jesus was baptized when he was approximately 30 years old, and for the next three years, until he turned 33, he dedicated himself to the people, sharing the teachings of God's mercy through his words, deeds, and miracles during his life in the Levant region, on the southeastern edge of the Mediterranean Sea.

This year, Pope Leo XIV will lead the commemoration of the Passion of Christ, following his election as Pope in May 2025. The Passion of Christ refers to the series of the most important episodes in the life of Jesus narrated in the Gospels, which include Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday), the Last Supper, the crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection. Palm Sunday, when Jesus enters Jerusalem on a donkey, symbolizes that his entry is one of peace, not war.

He is received with palm and olive branches to recognize him as the savior. It is here that Jesus carries out his triumphant entry, as some call it, and it is also here that what Christians know as the Passion of Jesus begins—the culmination of the mystery of Christ.

Jesus had already performed his miracles, fulfilling his promises. Although there are differing accounts of whether there were 37 or 42, these miracles refer to the same acts.

Before arriving in Jerusalem, Jesus stops and asks his apostles to untie a donkey so he can ride it into the city. Upon his arrival, the people greet him not only with

palm and olive branches but also spread out cloths on the ground to carpet his path, just as they did for kings. As he passed by, they shouted, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" and "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

It is worth noting that the life of Jesus was recorded in the biblical texts of the New Testament, comprised of the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, along with the testimonies of the apostles, the Epistles, and the Book of Revelation. We must remember that the Catholic Bible consists of two parts: the Old Testament, which compiles the most important books of the Jewish tradition, followed by the New Testament, which we have just mentioned.

Sigue cada semana en
EL CENTRAL Hispanic News
ESPECIAL CULTURAS DEL MUNDO,
by Mariana Ayón RV

# ESPECIAL CULTURAS DEL MUNDO

## Domingo de Ramos

## Domingo de Ramos

En las celebraciones de la iglesia católica, la cuaresma es la más importante, pues es la preparación de Jesús para llevar a cabo el milagro más grande, la resurrección. Si bien, Jesús fue bautizado cuando tenía aproximadamente 30 años y durante los siguiente tres años, hasta que cumplió los 33 años se dedicó al pueblo compartiendo las enseñanzas de la misericordia de Dios a través de sus palabras, actos y milagros durante su vida en la región de Levante, al extremo suroriente del Mar Mediterráneo.

Este año, el Papa León XIV liderará la conmemoración de la Pasión de Cristo tras su designación como Papa en mayo del año pasado 2025. La Pasión de Cristo es como se le llama al conjunto de episodios más importantes de la vida de Jesús narrados en los evangelios, los cuales constituyen la entrada de Jesús a Jerusalén (Domingo de Ramos), la última cena, la crucifixión, muerte, entierro y resurrección.

El Domingo de Ramos, es cuando Jesús entra a Jerusalén en un asno es un símbolo de que su entrada es una entrada de paz, no de guerra, siendo así recibido con ramos de palmas y olivos para reconocerle como el salvador. Y es aquí, cuando Jesús lleva a cabo su entrada triunfante, como algunos le llaman, y es aquí también cuando se da inicio a lo que se conoce para los cristianos La Pasión de Jesús, el fin del cumplimiento del misterio de Cristo.

Jesús había realizado ya sus milagros, había cumplido, que, aunque hay divergencias entre si fueron 37 o 42, estos refieren a los mismos actos.

Antes de llegar Jesús a Jerusalén, se detiene antes de entrar a Jerusalén donde les pide a sus apóstoles que vayan a desatar un burro al que se montará para entrar a Jerusalén. Al llegar las personas le reciben no sólo con los ramos de palmas y olivos, sino que tienden en el suelo para su paso prendas de tela que alfombraran su paso, tal como lo hacían para los reyes. A su paso gritaban: "¡Bendito el que viene en el nombre del Señor!", "¡Paz en el cielo y gloria en las alturas!".

Cabe destacar que la vida de Jesús quedó grabada en los textos bíblicos del Nuevo Testamento, constituido por los cuatro libros de los evangelios de Mateo, Marcos, Lucas y Juan, aunado a los testimonios de los apóstoles, las epístolas, así como el apocalipsis. Debemos recordar que la biblia católica está constituida por dos partes, el Antiguo Testamento que recopila los libros más importantes de la tradición judía, al que le sigue el Nuevo Testamento que acabamos de mencionar.

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